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(EAFORD)

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Commission on Human Rights

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*Item 8: Question of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine*

Mr. Chairman,

By electing Mahmoud Abbas in January 2005 the Palestinians have shown not only a high level of political maturity, but also a strong commitment to peace. The new President has taken all initiatives he could to respond to Israel's and the international pressures (mainly US pressure) related to Israel's Security. But his legitimacy rests also on responding to his people's legitimate aspirations to enjoy their rights to self-determination, to freedom, to peace and to development. The international community has a duty to help the Palestinians achieve these legitimate rights.

Mr. Chairman,

There is a lot of whispered untruths and EAFORD wants to recall some evidence:

- 1- It's not violence or terrorism which create occupation, it's the occupation which produces violence and terrorism.
- 2- It's not the Israelis, who need a partner for peace; it's the Palestinians who need such a partner.

The Palestinian people suffer war crimes and the most serious human rights violations as a result of a systematic state policy of Israel on every Palestinian territory (Jenine, Rafah, Nablous...). This has been well documented by credible witnesses of the international community such as the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur of the CHR on Palestine, International Court of Justice, Amnesty international, FIDH, HRW, etc.

Mr. Chairman,

The apartheid practiced against the Palestinian people is worse than the former South African one: in the South African system the blacks were considered as part of the system. The whites have not dared to build walls in order to separate peoples and transgress nature in this way. The Israeli government tries to put a maximum of Palestinians in a minimum of land. It is clearly an ethnic cleansing policy, but it is facilitated and encouraged by the US government, another occupation power in this 21 century.

The Arabs and the Palestinians have accepted the decisions of the international community. They offered peace in their summits, a peace based on the international legality and international law principles. Their good faith has always been faced by more Israeli aggressions. Sabra and Shatilla genocide happened after the Arab summit in FES in September 1982, Jenine massacres happened after the Arab summit in Beirut in March 2002!

Mr. Chairman,

The Palestinian people are vulnerable, today more than ever they need our help. We will only remain true to our principles if we work together to help them recover their most basic and legitimate rights.

**EAFORD**

23 March 2005